



July 7, 2005

Chairman Kevin Martin  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Martin:

As the Federal Communications Commission considers new rules for ‘must carry’ – particularly a proposal to give television broadcasters the right to choose whether local cable systems carry their analog or their digital channels – I urge you to explicitly ensure that the Commission takes into account the impact such a choice will have on the fulfillment of broadcasters’ public interest obligations. In addition, I urge you to complete the rulemaking on the Public Interest Obligations of Digital Broadcasters (MM Docket, 99-360) prior to final action on this item.

The digital television transition will bring enormous benefits to the broadcast industry like increased programming capabilities, and the FCC must act to ensure that the public interest is served. New, meaningful public interest obligations are needed to ensure that broadcasters provide opportunities for citizens to become informed about – and involved in – local civic affairs and elections, and that they use digital broadcasting’s enormously increased capacity to expand the diversity of viewpoints and voices available to the American public over its airwaves.

Moreover, the *Public Interest, Public Airwaves Coalition* (PIPA) has submitted proposed processing guidelines on public interest obligations for digital broadcasters to the FCC. These or similar guidelines ought to be given consideration before the Commission sets new must carry rules.

Sincerely,

Meredith McGehee  
Director, Media Policy Program  
Campaign Legal Center